

The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, July 5, 2020

A DIFFERENT WAY

Prayer, simplicity, humility... this Sunday's gospel gives us peace, the peace of mind that we so often need. In a society where we live at such an intense pace of life and so full of problems, it is comforting to see how Jesus is capable of giving us peace, serenity, inner joy. This Sunday's liturgy speaks to us of these feelings. In the first reading, the prophet Zacharias invites the people to rejoice, because this king will bring salvation and "he shall proclaim peace to the nations". The responsorial psalm presents the Lord to us as "good to all... compassionate toward all his works ... and holy in all his works". To the Lord, kind and compassionate, we must give thanks every day (prayer after communion) and ask him to fill us with joy: "fill your faithful with holy joy, for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin you bestow eternal gladness"(collect prayer). We cannot forget Jesus' words in the gospel: " Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest". Jesus' disciple no longer has to endure the humiliating weight of the Law, but a soft yoke, a light load. Jesus is "meek and humble of heart"; this is the best image of God, "slow to anger and of great kindness". Putting our life in His hands is the best way to find rest.

With the peace, joy and rest that come from God, the life of the Christian is different, that is, it is a life according to the Spirit. Saint Paul explains this to us in chapter 8 of his Letter to the Romans: "You are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you". The Apostle tells us that we can no longer live clinging to the values of "the flesh", that is, to immediate, material, superficial values, but to more spiritual and profound values, which today's gospel invites us to experience and that they can lead us to happiness, to a different life, that is, to the lives of the children of God: "if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live". Thus, we find ourselves facing a different way of looking at life, concerns, because they are enlightened by the joy, hope and peace that come from our faith. So, we must try to orient our life in this direction, praying to God the prayer over the gifts of this Sunday: "May this oblation dedicated to your name purify us, O Lord, and day by day bring our conduct closer to the life of heaven".

Let us not forget to pray for each other,

Father John Carlos